THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

**Protest Rally in Srinagar**

1119. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item appeared in the 'Kashmir Times' dated the 30th May, 2000 captioned "Rally in Srinagar to protest against blanket ban on fresh recruitments";

(b) if so, whether any Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by the State Government and Centre under which the fresh recruitments were banned; and

(c) if so, the factors for putting the ban on fresh recruitment with details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) to (c) The National Development Council in its meeting held on 19th February, 1999 had discussed the financial difficulties faced by several State Governments, arising among other, from pay hikes granted by the State Governments to their employees. In the meeting, it was decided that the Union Finance Minister would discuss with group of representative States, the financial diffculties and the medium-term fiscal strategy to be undertaken by them. Accordingly, the Ministry of Finance, in consultation with some representative States, decided that there was a need for joint effort to evolve a strategy to address fiscal issues/problems confronting States. This strategy resulted in a package of financial assistance provided by the Centre linked to appropriate time-bound programme of medium-term fiscal reform to be undertaken by the concerned States. As part of this fiscal strategy a Memorandum of understanding was signed between the State Government of J and K and the Central Government in which one of the conditions is not filling up posts becoming available in consequence of retirement on superannuation as well as vacancies arising in public sector undertakings, except for essential

requirements. The ban on recruitment however, will not cover selection already finalised on the recommendations of J and K Public Service Commission, J and K State Subordinate Services Selection and Recruitment Board and other approved Selection Boards and appointments on compassionate grounds relating to death caused due to militancy.

**Infiltration by Terrorists with sophisticated Military Equipments**

1120. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that terrorists are able to cross the border and bring with them highly sophisticated military equipments;

(b) if so, who is responsible for this lapse;

(c) whether any new and fresh steps have been thought of to fight terrorism; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) There have been continuous efforts on the part of Pak-ISI and pro-Pak militant outfits to cross over with sophisticated weaponry. The topography of the border is such that it is difficult to physically seal the entire stretch of border. However, security forces manning the border are alert & vigilant and have achieved some positive results.

(c) and (d) Government have adopted a well coordinated and multi-pronged approach for tackling the activities of militants, which includes strengthening the border management, gearing up the intelligence machinery, close surveillance of the border by intensive patrolling, conduct of special operations, nakas and ambushes, neutralizing plans of militants by coordinated action, modernisation and upgradation of police and security forces with advanced sophisticated weapons and communication system etc. Diplomatic initiatives have also been taken with the concerned countries to curb cross-border terrorism.